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AND PEOPLES

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS 1/

I. GENERAL

1. The British Virgin Islands comprises nearly 30 islands and islets, 16 of which are inhabited. They cover a total of 153 square kilometres and lie 96 kilometres east of Puerto Rico and 225 kilometres north-west of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The Territory also lies in close proximity to the United States Virgin Islands. The most important islands in the Territory are Tortola (54 square kilometres, the largest in the group), Anegada (38 square kilometres), Virgin Gorda (21 square kilometres) and Jost Van Dyke (9 square kilometres). Peter Island and Cooper Island are mainly holiday resorts. The main airport is situated on Beef Island. Road Town, the capital, is located on Tortola.

2. The climate is subtropical and is moderated by trade winds. The average temperature in winter ranges from 20 to 28 degrees centigrade and in summer from 26 to 31 degrees centigrade. Mean annual rainfall is 1,270 millimetres.

3. The Territory, along with other Commonwealth Caribbean countries, conducted a population and housing census from 15 April to 12 May 1991. The preliminary count indicated that on 12 May, census day, the total population of the Territory was 17,733 inhabitants, of whom 16,749 were residents and 984 were non-resident tourists. This figure represents an increase of more than 47 per cent over the 1980 census figure of 12,034. 1/ The distribution of the population is given in the table below.

Total population by islands, including institutional and marine population, 1980 and 1991 censuses

	1980	1991	Percentage change
British Virgin Islands	12 034	17 733	47.4
Tortola	9 119	13 568	48.8
Virgin Gorda	1 412	2 495	76.7
Anagada	164	156	(4.9)
Jost Van Dyke	134	141	5.2
Other islands	156	176	12.8
Marine population a/	220	108	(50.1)
Institutional population b/	662	1 089	64.5

Source: Territorial Development Planning Unit.

a/ Persons living on boats, yachts, etc., within territorial waters.

b/ Persons living collectively for disciplinary, health, military and other reasons. In the Territory, these persons are accommodated in the hospital, prisons, home for the aged and the police barrack.

4. A comparison of the census enumeration figures in 1980 and 1991 shows that the population of Tortola, which accounts for 76.5 per cent of the total population of the Territory, increased by 48.8 per cent, from 9,119 in 1980 to 13,568 in 1991. Virgin Gorda recorded the highest population growth since the last census was taken, with a population increase of 76.7 per cent, from 1,412 to 2,495. There was, however, a decline in the population of Anegada (down from 164 to 156), and a significant reduction in the number of persons living on yachts (50 per cent). 1/

5. The most densely populated areas are Purcell and Free Bottom, with a population of 1,488; Road Town, the capital, with a population of 2,948; and the area from Slaney to Baughers Bay, with a population of 6,330, or 35.7 per cent of the population of the Territory. 1/

6. The population increase in the Territory is attributed to the large influx of migrant workers. The economy of the Territory depends on them to meet its demand for workers in the construction and tourism sectors. 1/

7. Owing to the Territory's special relationship with the United States Virgin Islands, its residents are exempt from visa requirements of the United States of America when visiting the United States Virgin Islands. As a result of this arrangement, however, the Territory continued to experience some difficulties with illegal immigrants. It was reported on 16 May 1991 that immigration officials had found 29 illegal immigrants from countries in the Caribbean and in Asia stranded on Ginger Island. Officials believe that the final destination of the aliens, who were repatriated, was Puerto Rico. 2/

II. CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. Constitution

8. The Territory is administered under the Virgin Islands Constitution Order, 1976, which came into force in 1977 and was amended in 1979 and 1982. The Government consists of a Governor appointed by the Queen, an Executive Council and a Legislative Council.

9. The Governor is responsible for defence and internal security, external affairs, the civil service and the administration of courts. He acts in consultation with the Chief Minister on these matters. He has reserved legislative powers in the exercise of his responsibilities. On other matters, however, he is required to act in accordance with the advice of the Executive Council. The Constitution makes provision for the post of Deputy Governor.

10. The Executive Council consists of the Governor as Chairman, the Chief Minister, three other ministers and one ex officio member (the Attorney-General).

11. The Legislative Council consists of a Speaker who is elected from outside the Council, one ex officio member (the Attorney-General) and nine elected members returned from single-member constituencies every four years. The Governor appoints as Chief Minister the elected member of the Legislative Council most likely to command a majority in that body. The other ministers are appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister and are assigned responsibility for any government business, except in those areas for which the Governor retains responsibility. The Constitution provides for a Deputy Chief Minister and a Leader of the Opposition.

12. It was reported on 5 December 1991 that an amendment to the Constitution was proposed which would allow legislators to represent the Territory in regional affairs. Section 19 of the Constitution restricts participation in foreign affairs to the Governor only. 3/

Judiciary

13. The law of the British Virgin Islands is the common law of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, together with locally enacted legislation. It is administered by the Court of Summary Jurisdiction, the Magistrates' Court, the Juvenile Court and, by special arrangement, the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, which comprises a High Court of Justice and a Court of Appeal. There is a resident puisne judge whose jurisdiction includes Anguilla. The most recent judiciary review was conducted by the administering Power in March 1990 (see A/AC.109/1060, para. 14).

Appointment of a new Governor

14. In June 1991, the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office announced the appointment of Mr. Peter A. Penfold as successor to Governor Mark Herdman, whose five-year term of office was due to end on 11 October 1991. 4/ Governor Penfold was sworn in on 14 October 1991.

B. Political parties and elections

15. It will be recalled that the territorial Government announced in September 1990 the amendment by the Legislative Council of the Elections Act of 1977. The amended Act granted, inter alia, legal approval for proxy voting in the 1990 general election, including measures through the Territory's High Court to address any improprieties related to proxy voting, and for continuous voter registration. Final approval of the Act which would make it a law must be given by the administering Power, which reportedly has temporarily withheld approval after some opposition members raised objections to the amendment. 5/

16. In the 1990 general election, the ruling Virgin Islands Party (VIP), led by Mr. Lavity Stoutt, the Chief Minister, won six seats which enabled it to command a majority in the Legislative Council. Incumbents of the three remaining seats were returned to office. Election officials reported that the voter turnout was over 70 per cent. Some 495 applications were submitted for proxy voting, 37 of which were rejected. Following the election, there were allegations of irregularites relating to the securing and casting of proxy votes.

17. For information on the ministerial appointments by the Governor, see the working paper prepared by the Secretariat in 1991 (A/AC.109/1060, para. 20).

C. Future status of the Territory

1. Position of the territorial Government

18. During the campaign for the general election held in 1990, the question of the future political status of the Territory was not an issue. As previously reported, representatives of the territorial Government maintain the position that the people of the British Virgin Islands wish to preserve the current status, which could only be changed by a constitutional amendment (see A/AC.109/1060, paras. 21-23).

2. Position of the administering Power

19. In his statement before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on 23 October 1991, the representative of the United Kingdom said that the wishes of the people who lived in British dependent Territories were of primary importance and as such were used as the guiding principle in policy formulation by his Government. The United Kingdom took seriously its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations to develop self-government in its dependent Territories and, in cooperation with the locally elected Governments, to ensure that their constitutional frameworks continued to meet the wishes and aspirations of their peoples. His country also took seriously its obligations in responding to the economic needs of the people of the Territories. 6/

20. During a visit to the Territory to ascertain the wishes of the people, Mr. Adrian Beamish, Assistant Secretary of State for the Americas at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, stated that the United Kingdom Government "had no a priori disposition to bring the Territories to independence or to maintain them as dependencies". He further stated that if a particular Territory indicated its interest in any form of independence, his Government would respect the decision of the Territory; should a Territory wish to maintain the existing arrangement, however, his Government would likewise support that wish. 7/

21. Also, at a meeting with Chief Minister Stoutt during a visit to the Territory, Mr. Georges Foulkes, United Kingdom Member of Parliament, discussed the issue of where the boundaries between the responsibility of the United Kingdom Government and the territorial Government lay and whether they should be redefined. Mr. Foulkes referred specifically to control of the police and appointments to the civil service. He further stated that it would be inappropriate for the administering Power to initiate any change, but that it favoured consultation with the elected representatives of the territorial Government in order to be apprised of their views. He proposed a greater role for locally elected officials in the administration of the Territory. 8/

3. Action taken by the General Assembly

22. On 11 December 1991, the General Assembly adopted a consolidated resolution (46/68) on 10 dependent Territories, a section of which was specifically devoted to the Territory (resolution 46/68 B, sect. IV). In its resolution, the Assembly called upon the administering Power to facilitate the admission of the Territory to associate membership in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), as well as its participation in other regional and international organizations as identified by the territorial Government; and, in cooperation with the territorial Government, to provide the necessary assistance to the Territory to develop and diversify its economy. The Assembly noted with satisfacton the measures being taken by the territorial Government to prevent drug trafficking and money laundering, and urged the administering Power to continue its assistance to the Territory in those endeavours. The Assembly urged the regional and international financial institutions, as well as the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, to assist the territorial Government in identifying its medium- and long-term needs and to increase their participation in the recovery and reconstruction of the Territory. In resolution 46/68 A, the Assembly called upon the administering Powers of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate programmes of political education in the Territories in order to foster an awareness among the people of the possibilities open to them in the exercise of their right to self-determination, in conformity with the legitimate political status options clearly defined in its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960.

D. External relations

23. The British Virgin Islands is an associate member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and its subsidiary bodies, including the Caribbean Development Coordination Committee (CDCC). The Territory has also held associate status in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) since 1984, and most recently was granted the same status in CARICOM. During the period under review, it was represented in meetings of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation in Economic Development sponsored by the World Bank. The territorial Government has applied for membership in FAO.

24. As previously reported (A/AC.109/1060, paras. 28 and 29), the territorial Government had requested formal authorization from the administering Power to conclude an agreement with CARICOM for associate membership. The Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government, held in Saint Kitts and Nevis in July 1991, considered and approved the request for admission of the Territory as an associate member. 9/ The British Virgin Islands is the second Caribbean dependent Territory, after Montserrat, to hold associate membership status with CARICOM. As an associate member, the Territory can hold membership in all of the organization's standing committees, except for the

Standing Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, and will be able to attend the meetings of the heads of Government in an observer capacity. 10/ Following the signing of the agreement, Chief Minister Stoutt is reported to have stated, inter alia, that "the relationship ... forged today signals the formal launching of a most meaningful socio-economic union between member States and our own small but dynamic community". 11/

25. Prior to its admission as an associate member of CARICOM, the Territory held membership in institutions associated with CARICOM, including the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the University of the West Indies.

26. During the period under review, the British Virgin Islands continued to be actively involved in the activities of OECS. In June 1991, the Territory hosted a three-day OECS conference on coastal legislation, which was attended by representatives of seven OECS countries. 12/ Representatives of the Territory also attended OECS meetings abroad. In March 1991, two territorial government officials attended a regional meeting of the OECS Natural Resources Management Unit, held in Saint Lucia. 13/ In June 1991, a delegation led by the Chief Minister attended meetings of the OECS Economic Affairs Committee and the OECS Authority, as well as the Meeting of Ministers for Tourism of OECS countries, held in Grenada. 14/ In September 1991, it was reported that a trade officer had attended the ninth meeting of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Caribbean States Export Development Agency, an agency of OECS, held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. 15/ In October 1991, the Minister for Education attended the fifth annual Meeting of OECS Ministers for Education. 16/

27. It was reported that Mr. Joseph Archibald, Q.C., President of the British Virgin Islands Bar Association, had been elected President of the OECS Bar Association, at its first general meeting, held in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. 17/

28. During the period under review, the Territory continued to participate in programmes conducted by international organizations. Press reports in March 1991 stated that consultants of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had visited the Territory to hold talks with officials of the Ministry of Health, Education and Welfare, in the context of a five-year multi-island programme (see also para. 76). 18/ Also in the same month, a joint United Nations/United Kingdom Demand Reduction Task Force visited the Territory to help the National Drug Advisory Council complete plans for a two-year project (see also para. 87). 19/ In July 1991, the British Virgin Islands hosted a meeting which was sponsored by UNESCO and the Caribbean Network of Educational Innovation for Development (CARNEID) in conjunction with the British Development Division in the Caribbean. The meeting of Chief Education Officers was attended by participants from 15 Caribbean countries. 20/

29. There were exchanges of visits between high-level representatives of the administering Power, the territorial Government and regional and international organizations during the period under review. In February 1991, an official

of the West Indian and Atlantic Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Miss Nicola Walsh, paid a familiarization visit to the Territory. 21/ In September 1991, the United States Consul in Antigua visited the Territory, where she held discussions with the Governor and Chief Minister and conducted interviews for visas. 22/ Also in the same month, the Executive Director of the Eastern Caribbean Investment Promotion Service held talks in the Territory with officials regarding a project that would promote subregional investment opportunities. 22/ In November 1991, Baroness Young, a United Kingdom Member of Parliament, visited the Territory to hold meetings with the Governor, the Chief Minister and Department of Education officials. 23/

30. In March 1991, the Chief Minister attended an international tourism exposition at Berlin (see also para. 73), following which he travelled to London to hold two weeks of talks with officials of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as well as with representatives of the United Kingdom tourism and financial sectors. Additional items on the agenda were reported to be the issue of associate membership in CARICOM, the allocation of capital aid by the United Kingdom to the Territory, financial assistance for the extension of the Beef Island Airport runway and support by the territorial Government for the death penalty. 19/

31. The nineteenth annual United States Virgin Islands/British Virgin Islands Friendship Day was celebrated on 26 October 1991 in the British Virgin Islands. 24/

32. During the period under review, meetings between representatives of the British Virgin Islands and the United States Virgin Islands were held under the auspices of the Inter-Virgin Islands Conference, which was re-established in 1990 (see A/AC.109/1060, paras. 35 and 36). The first meeting was held to discuss possible areas of cooperation between the two Territories in disaster prevention 25/ and, in a second meeting, Chief Minister Stoutt and Governor Farrelly of the United States Virgin Islands discussed problems faced by both Territories, including that of illegal immigrants. In another meeting of the Conference held in the United States Virgin Islands in October 1991, they agreed to promote the two Territories jointly as a yachting and sport-fishing centre. 9/

E. Public service

33. According to 1985 figures, the latest year for which data are available, the territorial Government employed 1,107 civil servants, 866 of whom occupied established posts. The public service sector accounted for 21.9 per cent of the labour force. Following an examination of staffing needs and a salary revision in 1987 and 1988, the territorial Government decided to control the growth of the public service to the extent possible. In order to improve its efficiency, the Government planned to continue making improvements in in-service and overseas training for public servants.

34. In that regard, during the period under consideration, 44 civil servants at the mid-management level completed a two-year pilot project aimed at upgrading of skills. The programme, sponsored by the International Management Association Network, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Ontario Government and the Manitoba Institute of Management, was piloted in the British Virgin Islands and in Grenada. 26/ It was also reported in December 1991 that seven police officers who had returned from training in Barbados had joined the force, bringing the total number of officers to 124. 27/

35. A study conducted by the Fire and Rescue Services Department showed that the department was underequipped, thus influencing a decision of the Deputy Governor to purchase more equipment for it. 28/ Subsequently, it has been reported that expenses for fire services had increased considerably, to US$ 743,400 29/ in 1991 compared with $440,747 in 1989. 24/ The staff in the Fire Department had also increased from 30 to 36. With regard to Her Majesty's Prison, expenditure had also increased, from $320,288 in 1989 to $457,300 in 1991. Press reports stated that the territorial Government planned to build a temporary "open prison" in Paraquita Bay to ease overcrowding in the prison until a permanent facility is built. 30/

III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A. General

36. The economy of the British Virgin Islands is dependent on tourism, banking, real estate development, construction and government services. Agricultural and manufacturing activities play a secondary role. According to CDB in its report on the Territory for 1990, during the period under review, growth was fuelled by a rapid expansion of the offshore financial services sector. Also, the economic picture was being aided by both public and private sector investments in housing. The strong growth performance of these two sectors compensated for a decrease in the growth rate of visitor arrivals, which could be attributed to adverse after-effects of hurricane Hugo and a slowdown in growth in major tourist markets. Despite a sharp increase in government revenue, the sustained economic buoyance was accompanied by a slight increase in inflation and a shortage of skilled labour.

37. In its Annual Report 1990, CDB stated that during the year economic growth in the British Virgin Islands had decreased to 6.3 per cent from 7.5 per cent in 1989 although, overall, it expected the Territory to maintain a high rate of growth in 1991, owing to sustained public and private sector investment, particularly in construction. The Bank reported that the economy of the Territory had begun to be affected by a decline in stopover visitors, sharp increases in international oil prices, which contributed to a rise in domestic prices, and shortages of skilled labour. It expected no major growth in the agriculture and light manufacturing sectors, and noted that the economy of the Territory remained vulnerable to rising labour costs and external economic factors. It predicted that over the medium term, economic

performance would depend on the ability of the Territory to sustain growth in both the tourism and offshore financial service sectors.

B. Public finance

38. In his 1991 budget presentation on 18 April, the Chief Minister proposed current expenditure of $46 million and capital expenditure of $38 million and announced an expected current revenue intake of $50.7 million. 31/ The Chief Minister stated that the unfavourable international economic climate had been taken into consideration in drawing up the budget estimates, and called upon the Territory's financial institutions to play a greater role in development. 32/

39. Subsequent to the Chief Minister's presentation, in July 1991 the Legislative Council appropriated a budget supplement of more than $2 million, bringing the total budget appropriation to over $48 million. The additional appropriation included $300,000 for road repairs. 33/ In December 1991, the Legislative Council again approved an additional provision for recurrent expenditure of $1,776,000 and capital expenditure of $453,670. 34/

40. According to the 1991 recurrent budget estimates of revenue and expenditure, actual annual revenue in the Territory has more than tripled over the past decade, reaching $47.3 million in 1990. The largest amount of revenue ($24 million) was earned from taxes and licences, including licences from the Territory's offshore financial services sector. The second largest source of revenue was realized from customs ($10.8 million in 1990); and the third from government services ($7.7 million). Non-tax revenue, which accounts for the remainder, also reportedly increased by the same percentage. 35/

41. CDB reported that during 1990, commercial bank activity had continued at an extremely high level. Bank deposits increased by 9.8 per cent to $312 million while advances increased by 16.5 per cent to $162 million. At the end of June 1990, bank loans totalled $152 million, an increase of 21.9 per cent over the 1989 figure for the same period. These funds were given mainly to finance personal loans and to provide credit to the construction and commercial sectors. There was, however, a change in the distribution of bank credit, with property loans accounting for 29.9 per cent of total loans outstanding at the end of 1990, compared with 32.3 per cent in 1989. Similarly, the share of construction loans decreased from 20.9 to 19.8 per cent. Conversely, shares of personal loans rose from 25.5 to 27.3 per cent, commercial loans rose from 14.7 to 16.1 per cent and real estate loans increased from 5.4 to 5.7 per cent.

42. In 1990, the territorial Government concluded negotiations with a consortium of four locally based commercial banks and the Social Security Board for a loan of $11.5 million to finance a new central administrative complex and government law offices at Wickham's Cay.

43. It was reported on 7 December 1991 that the territorial Government would begin paying its annual instalment of $62,500 to the CDB Special Development Fund. The total contribution of $250,000 which was approved by the Legislative Council is to be charged against the Capital Fund. 34/

44. Press reports in January 1992 stated that according to a British Member of Parliament, the British Development Division in Barbados would not increase the amount of money available to the British Virgin Islands, since the Territory had been successful in increasing its average gross domestic product (GDP). That decision was taken in accordance with the policy of the British Development Division of requiring a Territory to finance its own capital programme once its average GDP reaches a certain level. 36/

C. Land, development and construction

45. CDB reported that during 1990, social and physical infrastructural projects were the key feature of capital expenditure. Among the projects completed were the rehabilitation of schools damaged by hurricane Hugo, the construction of multi-purpose health clinics and the rehabilitation of roads and bridges. During 1991-1992, the territorial Government planned to invest $59.7 million in its Public Sector Investment Programme. The projects envisaged are consistent with the objective of providing basic infrastructure which would directly support productive activities.

46. In the six-month period ending in June 1990, CDB reported that construction starts were estimated at 147 and valued at $24.1 million, and the reconstruction and repair work done in the aftermath of hurricane Hugo had made the construction sector one of the more dynamic areas in 1990. Commercial banks supported both the reconstruction of small buildings and the restoration of dwellings, using payments received from damage insurance and reinsurance claims. Delays in the disbursement of funds by multilateral agencies, however, hindered full implementation by the territorial Government of its reconstruction programme for 1990.

47. It was announced in November 1991 that the Barbados-based British Development Division had appropriated over $1 million for expansion projects on Virgin Gorda. The funds are expected to be used for capital improvements, including improvements to port facilities and the water supply, the construction of a passenger terminal, jetties and a prefabricated reservoir with a desalination plant, and the extension of educational facilities. 37/

48. Other projects slated for execution included the construction of a cruise ship dock at Wickham's Cay, which is to be funded by CDB; and a $350,000 marine shore base, which is being funded by British Development Aid; as well as construction and equipping of a solid waste incinerator, 70 per cent of which was to be financed by the Bank of Nova Scotia ($3.5 million) and the remaining 30 per cent by the territorial Government. 38/

49. Further to the report on the territorial Government's policy of buying land which it makes available to local buyers as the need arises (A/AC.109/1021, para. 39, and A/AC.109/1060, para. 51), the territorial Government contracted the British Executive Services Overseas Organization to conduct a study on government management of more than 1,214 hectares of land classified as Crown Land. Results of the study showed that land was being inefficiently managed and that the Government could earn more from its real estate investments. The study recommended the establishment of a computerized management system to facilitate the monitoring of lease agreements. It was reported that more than 50 per cent of Crown Land was leased to businesses and individuals. 39/

50. It was reported in the local press that the Land Development Control Ordinance of 1969, which aims at regulating development in the Territory, is to be superseded by a land planning and development bill which was developed with assistance from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS). 40/

51. According to press reports, the European Economic Community is to contribute about $12 million to the Territory over the next few years to fund several projects, including the construction of three water distribution plants. The project is part of a national plan to improve water supply facilities, and is included in the territorial Government's Public Sector Investment Programme. 40/

D. Agriculture, livestock and fisheries

52. CDB reported that in 1990, the agriculture sector had recovered slightly after hurricane Hugo caused a 90 per cent loss of crops, livestock and farm buildings the previous year. The recovery was a result of incentives which the territorial Government provided, in order to overcome the constraints caused by the hurricane.

53. During the period under review, fresh fruit and vegetable production increased as a result of strengthened domestic marketing arrangements. In the livestock subsector, the linkage between farmers and meat distributors was also strengthened, resulting in an expansion in the supply of fresh beef to the extent that 90 per cent of the local demand was met in 1990. Also, beef exports to other Caribbean islands continued.

54. In November 1991, police and immigration officers, as well as an OECS representative and members of the Port Authority, attended a seminar whose focus was enforcement of fishing regulations. 41/ Also, improvement of the Territory's fishing industry was the topic of a seminar conducted by the Department of Conservation and Fisheries in December 1991.

55. In 1990, the Department of Agriculture began a five-year project aimed at bringing 47 hectares of land under fruit-tree cultivation. In March 1991, it was reported that the pilot phase had been completed with 3.2 hectares of

planting. The Department, which provided the trees, fencing and basic irrigation material, assisted project participants in marketing their produce. 17/

56. In an effort to assist livestock and crop farmers, the Department reportedly opened an agricultural substation, which would provide a wide range of services to both livestock and crop farmers. 42/ Also, a significant increase in egg production could be attributed to a major drive by the Department to improve production methods, including conducting management workshops for poultry farmers. 43/

E. Industrial development and mining

57. Industrial activities continued to recover from the effects of hurricane Hugo during the period under review. This recovery was confined, however, to firms engaged in food processing, handicraft production for the local market and stone crushing. With regard to stone-crushing activities, CDB warned that the unplanned exploitation of that resource might cause future ecological problems. In contrast, the boat-building and boat repair industry showed a slight contraction owing to a slow-down in tourism.

58. CDB reported that no major growth was expected in light manufacturing, given existing bottlenecks and disincentives. It was reported in the local press that in an effort to stimulate industrial development, the territorial Government had undertaken a review of business incentives legislation. The legislation includes the Pioneer Services and Enterprises Ordinance of 1966, the Hotel Aid Amendment Act of 1977 and the Encouragement of Industries Act of 1961. Under review also are various customs acts which provide for exemption from import duty of goods relevant to the production of locally manufactured goods. 44/

F. Communications and other basic facilities

59. As part of the territorial Government's Public Sector Investment Programme, the upgrading of the Beef Island Airport terminal and the rehabilitation of roads and bridges are among the projects to be executed.

60. It was reported in May 1991 that CIDA had launched the $4.5 million Beef Island Airport project, which was a follow-up effort to the five-year Caribbean Airport Project that was completed in 1990. The project, which is expected to provide institutional support, is a continuation of the upgrading of airport operations and maintenance systems started during the first project. The Territory was among 13 countries in the region that had received technical assistance and equipment from CIDA during implementation of the initial project. The follow-up project, which was begun in February 1991, aims at ensuring that aviation management procedures in the Caribbean meet high enough standards to contribute to the economic development of the region. 35/

61. According to press reports, the financially troubled national carrier, Air BVI, which had been grounded in June 1991, was being assumed by a British company that had been negotiating the purchase of the majority of the airline's stock. Meanwhile, competing airlines filled the void, and the territorial Government had asked another carrier, Virgin Air, to begin flying to Beef Island Airport. It was expected that the national carrier would resume service by February 1992. 45/

62. The Territory continued to receive telecommunications service from Cable and Wireless (West Indies), Limited. In July 1991, that company announced that it would introduce a new package of telephone rates, which would result in reduced rates for internatonal calls. 5/

G. International business and finance

63. The consistent success of the Territory as an offshore financial centre could be attributed to a stable political climate and to incentives by the territorial Government. In its annual report, CDB noted that 15,500 international business companies had been incorporated in the Territory in 1990, bringing the total number to 38,400. In comparison, an estimated 11,000 companies were incorporated in 1989. The expansion brought in $7.2 million in revenue.

64. In order to enhance further the Territory's reputation as an international financial centre, the territorial Government made significant changes in legislation governing the operations of commercial banks and other financial institutions. These included amendments to the Company Management Act, 1990, and the Bank and Trust Companies Act, 1990, which the Legislative Council passed in October 1990 and became law on 15 June 1991, and the International Business Company (Amendment) Act, which was passed in December 1991 and became effective in January 1992 (see A/AC.109/1060, paras. 71-73). The amendments, which are aimed at rectifying deficiencies in legislation governing the operations of the financial services sector, provide for more effective management and supervisory control of banking, trust, business and related matters.

65. On 21 March 1991, the Legislative Council passed the Insurance Business (Special Provisions) Act of 1991, which would enable an insurance supervisor to investigate in detail all insurance companies registered in the Territory. The new legislation applies both to onshore and offshore insurance businesses, and is expected to impose stricter regulations on insurance companies doing business in the Territory and to create an attractive environment for legitimate insurance business. 43/ It was reported that upon enforcement of the Act, some 25 insurance companies might be prosecuted and 400 struck off the British Virgin Islands register. 40/

66. The offshore financial sector employs some 400 persons, whose average wage is reported to be the highest in the Territory. Efforts are under way to encourage nationals to obtain qualifications and acquire experience that would

qualify them to occupy senior positions in the industry. In this regard, the territorial Association of Registered Agents announced its intention to conduct a long-term education programme, in conjunction with the British Virgin Islands Community College, to prepare nationals for some senior management positions. 46/

H. Tourism and related activities

67. CDB reported that although in 1990 tourism remained one of the two major pillars of the Territory's economy, a decrease in the growth rate of visitor arrivals in the Territory continued, with total visitor arrivals recorded at 336,116, representing an increase of only 9.9 per cent in comparison to an increase of 25.8 per cent in 1989. According to the Territory's Planning Unit, total arrivals for the third quarter of 1991 were 73,877, compared with 76,432 during the same period in 1990, a 3.3 per cent decrease. 47/

68. In 1990, the number of stopover visitors declined marginally by 0.32 per cent to 176,613. Stopover visitors accounted for 52.5 per cent of total arrivals, compared with 57.9 per cent in 1989.

69. Although there were fewer stopover visitors, it has been reported that the average length of stay and visitor expenditure increased. 10/ Government figures show that stopover guests spent $6.4 million more in 1990 than the previous year. Cruise ship visitors reportedly spent $2.9 million in 1990 and day visitors spent $900,000. Also, during the third quarter of 1991, tourist expenditure amounted to $25,518, compared with $23,810 during the same period in 1990, a 7.2 per cent increase.

70. On the other hand, the cruise ship industry was robust in 1990, with arrivals increasing by 51.7 per cent over the figure for 1989, to reach 107,333. The sharp increase in visitors stemmed in part from a diversion of cruise ship traffic from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean as a result of the crisis in the Middle East, and in part from reconstruction of the tourism infrastructure in the neighbouring United States Virgin Islands. 10/

71. The charter sailing industry reported a 3.3 per cent decrease in revenue in late 1990 and early 1991, owing to a 10 per cent reduction in business. The industry traditionally accounts for nearly half of the Territory's tourism income. A Tourist Board report showed that $58.7 million had been spent in chartering in 1990, compared with $60.7 million in 1989. 11/

72. Press reports stated that the tourist industry in the Territory would receive $5 million in funding through the Lomé III programme to OECS. The funds are earmarked for marketing, training and environmental studies relating to tourism. 47/

73. In March 1991, Chief Minister Stoutt led a delegation to a tourism trade exhibition at Berlin, Germany, where he announced the appointment of a new

Berlin-based British Virgin Islands Tourist Board representative. While in Berlin, the delegation attended a meeting of the Caribbean Tourism Organization. 17/ Representatives of the territorial Government and the local tourist industry also attended the annual conference of that organization, which was held in Venezuela in September 1991. 48/

I. Assistance from the specialized agencies and other organizations and institutions of the United Nations system

74. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country programme for the Territory for the period 1987-1991 remained the frame of reference for external technical cooperation inputs, particularly from the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system represented in the Caribbean. Owing to the Territory's high per capita income, UNDP has noted that the Territory might graduate to "net-contributor status" in the fifth programming cycle (1992-1996). Should this occur, all costs for projects would be borne fully by the Government. Assistance by UNDP continued primarily in the area of physical development planning.

75. UNICEF continued to provide assistance to the Territory. In 1991, it programmed $5,000 for early childhood education and development, $10,000 for women in development and $2,000 for health. These figures do not include programme support costs and other funds received through subregional activities. 49/

76. The British Virgin Islands is one of nine Caribbean countries participating in the UNICEF-sponsored five-year multi-island programme. The Territory has received approximately $90,000 since the programme began. The programme, which is aimed at improving the lives of children in the region and which has also funded the expansion of certain preschool buildings and recreational areas, is expected to end in 1992. During a visit to the Territory in February 1991, UNICEF consultants and territorial officials discussed the impact of the 50 per cent reduction in funds provided by UNICEF in 1991, and the possibility of continuation of the multi-island programme after 1992. 18/

77. During the period under review, the Territory also received assistance from UNCHS (see para. 50).

J. External debt and trade

78. According to CDB, the external debt of the Territory decreased from $22 million at the end of 1989 to $17.5 million at the end of 1990. Most of the debt took the form of loans from international institutions.

79. According to statistics released by the Development Planning Unit for 1989, the Territory imported $131 million worth of goods, representing a

9.4 per cent increase over the previous year, and exported goods amounting to $3.4 million. Although the figures showed a continued trend of a growing trade deficit, exports for 1989 had also increased, as had been the pattern since 1982. In 1989, exports increased by 14 per cent over the 1988 figure of $3 million. Imports have increased by 163 per cent since 1981, when $49.8 million in goods was taken into the Territory. The Unit attributed the increase in imports in part to demands placed by tourism. The imbalance was offset, however, by earnings from the tourism sector. Whereas in 1989 the intake from exports was only $3.4 million, revenue earned from tourism was $124.7 million. 27/

80. During a visit to the Territory, a British Member of Parliament stated that a Labour Government would encourage and promote trade between the administering Power and the Caribbean, particularly its dependent Territories. 24/

IV. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A. Labour

81. According to CDB, the relative scarcity of skilled manpower remained the single most important constraint to the realization of the full development potential of the economy of the Territory. It regarded the current scarcity of human resources as not only of a general quantitative nature, but also of a qualitative one. CDB noted that efforts at improving the quality of the labour force should be expanded in order to upgrade skills.

82. In 1990, the British Virgin Islands Community College was opened with the aim of meeting the manpower requirements of the public service and the tourist and financial sectors. The programme is, however, reported to be experiencing a shortage of staff in addition to inadequate facilities, which the territorial Government intends to address.

B. Public health

83. The Territory continued to be served by the 55-bed Pebbles Hospital on Tortola and a number of health clinics throughout the Territory.

84. It was reported in December 1991 that eight persons had been infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The Caribbean Epidemiological Centre (CAREC) has recommended that an education campaign on the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) should be conducted. 50/

85. During the period under review, a senior medical technologist at CAREC conducted a course in the Territory, which is expected to serve as the basis for a survey on the prevalence of parasitic infections in children in the British Virgin Islands. 3/

C. Crime prevention and drugs

86. In May 1991, it was reported that the British Government had decided to abolish the death penalty for murder in its Caribbean dependent Territories. Leaders of the territorial Government protested the decision and requested that it be reviewed since the local Government had not been consulted. 31/

87. In March 1991, a delegation, which included representatives of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and of the United Kingdom Demand Reduction Task Force visited the Territory to assist the National Drug Advisory Council in completing plans for a proposed two-year drug awareness and demand reduction project. 19/

88. The British Virgin Islands drug interdiction effort received a boost with the arrival of a surveillance aircraft, which would be an improvement over the previous system of sharing an air and marine surveillance aircraft with the Turks and Caicos Islands. 44/ It was also reported that the 200-man British frigate HMS Active had visited Tortola after it had concluded a five-day drug-interdiction mission. In addition to drug interdiction, the frigate conducts general defence, anti-submarine, search and rescue and hurricane relief activities. 19/

89. The total amount of cocaine seized in the Territory between January and June 1991 was 12,070.5 grams, compared with 6,264.5 grams during the corresponding period in 1990. Similarly, the number of arrests for possession and distribution of illegal drugs in the Territory reportedly increased by nearly 200 per cent in the first six months of 1991 compared to the same period in 1990. 51/

90. It was reported in January 1992, however, that overall crime statistics for 1991 showed a significant reduction from the 1990 figures. Total crimes decreased by 15 per cent, from 893 in 1990 to 762 in 1991. 52/

D. Human rights

91. On 20 June 1990, the Chief Minister presented the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to the Territory's Legislative Council for adoption. Both Covenants had been ratified by the United Kingdom and extended to its dependent Territories in 1976. They were not part of the local law and would only become so when adopted by the Territory's Legislature.

V. EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS

92. Education in the Territory is free and compulsory for all children between 5 and 14 years of age. During the period under review, the Territory's Government took steps to strengthen the educational system in the Territory.

93. It was reported in April 1991 that the territorial Government was considering investing $13.6 million in its first five-year development plan for education, following a recommendation by British-based Cambridge Education Consultants. The plan envisaged spending $3.5 million for a new senior high school, which would accommodate 600 pupils, $3.4 million for improvements to the community college, $713,000 for refurbishing the high school as a junior high school, $478,000 for upgrading the Bregado Flax Education Centre and $322,000 for refurbishing primary schools. Under the plan, additional funds would be spent on consultancies, local and external teacher-training, a teacher resource centre and small libraries for schools throughout the territory. 32/

Notes

1/ The information contained in this paper has been derived from published reports including the Caribbean Development Bank Annual Report 1990 and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General on 31 July and 16 August 1991 by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations.

2/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 18 May 1991.

3/ The Beacon (Tortola), 5 December 1991.

4/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 29 June 1991.

5/ The Beacon (Tortola), 13 January 1991.

6/ A/C.4/46/SR.11, paras. 9 and 10.

7/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 5 October 1991.

8/ Ibid., 12 October 1991.

9/ Ibid., 6 July 1991.

10/ The Beacon (Tortola), 4 July 1991.

11/ Ibid., 11 July 1991.

12/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 8 June 1991.

13/ The Beacon (Tortola), 21 March 1991.

14/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 15 June 1991.

15/ Ibid., 21 September 1991.

16/ Ibid., 19 October 1991.

Notes (continued)

17/ Ibid., 9 March 1991.

18/ Ibid., 2 March 1991.

19/ The Beacon (Tortola), 7 March 1991.

20/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 27 July 1991.

21/ Ibid., 7 February 1991.

22/ Ibid, 19 September 1991.

23/ Pacific Daily News (Agana), 2 November 1991.

24/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 26 October 1991.

25/ Ibid., 16 March 1991.

26/ The Beacon (Tortola), 28 November 1991.

27/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 14 December 1991.

28/ The Beacon (Tortola), 3 October 1991.

29/ The local currency is the United States dollar.

30/ The Beacon (Tortola), 12 September 1991.

31/ Caribbean Insight (United States), May 1991.

32/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 27 April 1991.

33/ The Beacon (Tortola), 18 July 1991.

34/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 7 December 1991.

35/ The Beacon (Tortola), 9 May 1991.

36/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 11 January 1992.

37/ Ibid., 16 November 1991.

38/ Ibid., 22 June 1991; see also The Beacon, 14 November 1991.

39/ The Beacon (Tortola), 1 and 15 August 1991.

40/ Ibid., 26 September 1991.

Notes (continued)

41/ Ibid., 21 November 1991.

42/ Ibid., 10 November 1990.

43/ Ibid., 4 May 1991.

44/ Ibid., 11 May 1991.

45/ Ibid., 20 June and 21 December 1991.

46/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 21 December 1991.

47/ The Beacon (Tortola), 27 June 1991.

48/ The Island Sun (Tortola), 14 September 1991.

49/ The Beacon (Tortola), 29 August 1991.

50/ Department of Information and Public Relations, News Releases Nos. 76R/91 and 238/91.

51/ The Beacon (Tortola), 5 September 1991.

52/ Department of Information and Public Relations, News Release No. 010R/92; see also The Island Sun (Tortola), 28 September 1991.

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WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

MONTSERRAT

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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MONTSERRAT 1/

I. GENERAL

1. Montserrat is situated in the Leeward Islands in the eastern Caribbean, 43 kilometres south-west of Antigua and 64 kilometres north-west of the French Overseas Department of Guadaloupe. It has a maximum length of 18 kilometres and a maximum width of 11 kilometres and covers an area of 103 square kilometres. The capital of Montserrat is Plymouth.

2. The Territory, which is in the hurricane zone, was struck by hurricane Hugo on 17 September 1989, causing severe damage to the infrastructure and to private homes, as well as to the tourist, agriculture and fishing industries. As a result of emergency and rehabilitation assistance, mainly from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and from regional and international agencies, and owing to local recovery efforts, the Territory's economy was able to show some growth during the period under review.

3. At the census taken in 1980, the population of the Territory was 12,074 inhabitants. In its report on the Territory for the year 1989/90, the Government of the United Kingdom indicated that the mid-year population estimate for 1989 was 11,924 inhabitants, of which persons between the ages of 15 and 64 years accounted for 61.3 per cent, persons under the age of 15 years for 26.5 per cent and those over 65 years of age for 12.2 per cent. The population growth rate was 0.1 per cent, and the population density was 302 persons per square mile. The Territory was among the 16 Commonwealth Caribbean countries that participated in a census taken in 1991.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. Constitution

4. According to information provided by the administering Power for the year 1989/90, the Territory is administered under the following constitutional arrangements:

(a) The Montserrat Constitution Order, 1989, which came into force early in 1990 and revoked:

(i) The Montserrat Letters Patent, 1959;

(ii) The Montserrat Letters Patent (Amendment) Order, 1971;

(iii) The Montserrat (Governor) Order, 1971;

(iv) Part II of the Constitution and Elections Ordinance.

In essence, the new Constitution subsumed a number of different constitutional provisions into one document and increased the Governor's special responsibilities to include the overseeing of the offshore banking industry (see para. 6);

(b) The Leeward Islands (Emergency Powers) Order, 1959, which empowers the Governor to declare a state of emergency and to make laws under it;

(c) The Constitution and Elections Ordinance (Laws of Montserrat), which governs the institution of the Legislative Council and elections thereto, the legislative process and the holding of elections. Subsidiary legislation is made under this Ordinance defining electoral districts and Standing Orders for the Legislative Council.

5. Briefly, the Constitution provides for a Governor appointed by Her Majesty the Queen; an Executive Council, comprising the Governor as President, the Chief Minister, three other ministers and two ex officio members (the Attorney-General and the Financial Secretary); and a Legislative Council, comprising a Speaker, two ex officio members (the Attorney-General and the Financial Secretary), seven elected members returned from single-member constituencies on the basis of universal adult suffrage and two nominated members.

6. Ministerial responsibilities cover all areas of government business with the exception of external affairs, internal security, defence, the public service, international financial services and any sector related to finance, areas for which the Governor is responsible. Following a survey of offshore financial services in the dependent Territories undertaken by the British Government in 1990, the special responsibilities of the Governor were extended to cover international financial services.

7. During the Governor's absence, the Speaker of the Legislative Council acts as Governor.

Judiciary

8. A Magistrates' Court, presided over by a Resident Magistrate is situated at Plymouth. The functions of Registrar General, Registrar to the High Court and Deputy Registrar to the Court of Appeal are performed by an officer holding the post of Registrar who also acts for the Magistrate during his absence.

9. The Eastern Caribbean States Supreme Court (Montserrat) Ordinance, 1968, created the High Court and Court of Appeal. Appeals to Her Majesty's Privy Council are governed by the Montserrat (Appeals to Privy Council) Order, 1967. A judge of the High Court visits Montserrat thrice each year to hold assizes and an Appeal Court Justice visits twice each year.

10. The Attorney-General is the Public Prosecutor, and these powers are vested in him to the exclusion of any other person. There are several locally appointed justices of the peace with limited powers of summary jurisdiction.

B. Political parties and elections

11. In the general elections held in August 1987 for the seven elected seats in the Legislative Council, the ruling People's Liberation Movement (PLM) led by Mr. John Osborne won four seats, the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) led by Mr. P. Austin Bramble won one seat and the new National Development Party (NDP) led by Mr. Bertrand Osborne won two seats. Mr. John Osborne was appointed to a third consecutive term as Chief Minister (see A/AC.109/944, paras. 8-12).

12. On 15 September 1991, the Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. Benjamin Chalmers, resigned from the Government and the ruling PLM, leaving it with three seats, thereby removing its parliamentary majority and causing the collapse of the Government.

13. General elections were held on 8 October 1991 one year earlier than scheduled and contested by 26 candidates, mainly from three political parties: the ruling PLM, the opposition NDP and the newly established National Progressive Party (NPP) led by Mr. Reuben Meade, a former civil servant and an official of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). After the counting of the ballots, it was announced that NPP had won four of the seven elected seats, PLM and NDP had won one seat each and an independent candidate had won the seventh seat. The main campaign issues of the elections were morality and integrity among public officials. The question of future political status was only raised by NDP, which was opposed to independence for Montserrat at the time of the election (see para. 16 below). 2/

14. After the elections the following ministerial appointments were made by the Governor:

Chief Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Development	Mr. Reuben Meade
Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Communication and Works	Mr. David Brandt
Minister for Education, Health and Community Services	Miss Lagelle Howes
Minister for Agriculture, Trade and Lands and Housing	Mr. Charles Kirnon

Mr. Reuben Meade, 36 years old, is the youngest head of Government in the English-speaking Caribbean.

C. Future status of the Territory

Position of the Government of Montserrat

15. According to the report of the administering Power on the Territory for 1989/90, the United Nations Visiting Mission which visited the Territory in August 1982 had accurately reflected the views of the Territory towards independence. The administering Power reported that, in November 1988, the territorial Government had issued the following statement on independence:

> "The Government considers that independence is both inevitable and desirable, provided it is preceded by Montserrat achieving a level of economic and financial viability sufficient to sustain it as an independent State. And to this end, it is the Government's intention to seek from Her Majesty's Government and other aid donors, levels of aid necessary to achieve such viability.
>
> "The granting of independence will not be sought from Her Majesty's Government without the support of the majority of the people."

This is an elaboration of the earlier stated policy by the territorial Government that "economic independence must precede political independence".

16. The positions of the leaders of the main political parties operating in the Territory are contained in previous working papers on the Territory, including document A/AC.109/1061, paragraphs 12 to 14.

17. During the election campaign in October 1991, the question of independence was raised by the opposition NDP, whose leader is opposed to political independence for Montserrat. PLM, however, which favoured independence, did not campaign on the issue.

18. According to press reports the new ruling NPP had indicated that although it considered independence to be inevitable it would adopt a gradual approach in preparing the people of Montserrat for independence. NPP, however, was committed to promoting a more positive role for Montserrat in regional integration. 2/

19. In November 1991, the Chief Minister attended the Fourth Europe-Caribbean Conference at Brussels sponsored by the London-based West India Committee. One of the objectives of the Conference was to provide an opportunity for Caribbean political and business leaders to meet and to discuss with their European counterparts issues, policies and future approaches towards the development of the Caribbean region. 3/

20. In an unpublished paper entitled "The Dependent Territories and their future with the United Kingdom and Europe", which dealt mainly with trade and related issues, the Chief Minister stated, inter alia, that:

"The British Dependent Territories are likely to retain that status for the foreseeable future. It appears as if there is a persistent reluctance on the part of the majority of nationals to consider statehood even though this idea has been advanced by some intellectuals and the occasional political leader. The justification for this advice usually includes population size, perceptions of insecurity, narrow resource base and economic vulnerability. It is generally believed that the reserved powers of Her Majesty's Government are necessary for securing social, political and economic stability. Many go as far as to posit that this relationship plays a vital role in attracting business and investment to the islands. Although political advancement is not actively pursued, popular expectation for rapid and sustained development is no different from what obtains in sovereign States. Indeed, given our proximity to the United States of America and the constant exposure of our people to their materialistic values and culture through the electronic media, these expectations are reinforced and amplified. I know that we must re-educate tastes and expectations but we cannot ignore the social environment which continually impacts on our people."

21. In the same paper, the Chief Minister noted that the dependent Territories were variously endowed with limited resources, a fact that made them dependent on the United Kingdom and the European Community for aid and investment. In that connection, he noted also the stated position of the administering Power that the dependent Territories were given priority in the aid budget according to their "reasonable" needs. He added, however, that there was a difference of opinion of what those needs were.

Position of the administering Power

22. In his statement before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on 23 October 1991, the representative of the United Kingdom said, inter alia, that it was totally wrong to equate self-determination solely with independence and not to take available options into account; the wishes of the peoples of the dependent Territories were of primary importance. His Government took seriously its obligations under the Charter to develop self-government in its dependent Territories and, in cooperation with the locally elected Governments, to ensure that their constitutional frameworks continued to meet the wishes and aspirations of their peoples. His Government also took seriously its obligations to the economic needs of its dependent Territories. In that context, he noted that resolutions before the Committee ignored completely the benefits that foreign economic interests brought to dependent Territories. He added that it was high time to recognize the positive and beneficial role of foreign investments, especially in small islands with limited capital and few natural resources of their own. 4/

Action taken by the General Assembly

23. On 11 December 1991, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/68, an omnibus resolution on 10 Non-Self-Governing Territories, including Montserrat. In its resolution 46/68 A, the Assembly called upon the administering Powers, in cooperation with the territorial Governments, to facilitate programmes of political education in the Territories in order to foster an awareness among the peoples of the possibilities open to them in the exercise of their right to self-determination, in conformity with the political status options clearly defined in resolution 1541 (XV) of 14 December 1960. The Assembly reiterated that it was the responsibility of the administering Powers to create such conditions in the Territories as would enable their people to exercise freely and without interference their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. In resolution 46/68 B, section VIII, on Montserrat, the Assembly urged the administering Power, inter alia, to continue to intensify and expand its programme of aid in order to accelerate the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Territory.

D. External affairs

24. The Territory continues to be a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), as well as the institutions associated with both groups, including the University of the West Indies, CDB and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB). It is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and its subsidiary body, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC). The Territory is also represented at meetings of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation and Development sponsored by the World Bank.

25. During the period under review, representatives of the Territory participated in regional and international conferences and programmes organized by Governments, international organizations and multilateral agencies. In June 1991, the German Ambassador to the Eastern Caribbean visited the Territory to present his credentials to the Government of Montserrat and the Chief Minister. 5/ In September 1991, an adviser to the Guadeloupe Legislature also visited the Territory to discuss closer ties with the French Overseas Departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique. This was part of an agreement with OECS on closer cooperation in several areas, including tourism, trade, culture and education. 6/ On 27 September 1991, the Territory hosted the 15th meeting of the Monetary Council of ECCB. The meeting was attended by the Prime Ministers of Dominica and Saint Lucia, the Ministers for Finance of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Governor of ECCB and the Secretary-General of OECS. 7/

E. Public service

26. In its most recent report on the Territory, the administering Power stated that budget estimates for 1992 made provision for 746 established posts, 7 of which were held by expatriates from the United Kingdom and from the Caribbean region. The report indicated also that the passage of hurricane Hugo in 1989 necessitated an increase in the number of technical cooperation officers, particularly in the areas relating to physical planning, architecture, medicine and finance. Provision was made for 679 non-established posts during the period under review.

27. According to the administering Power, the policy of the territorial Government was to replace expatriates with nationals when they became suitably trained and qualified. It noted however, that as a result of the hurricane, the Government Training Unit had to be relocated and that, in the absence of suitable classrooms during most of 1990, local in-service training programmes had to be scaled down significantly.

28. During the period under review, the Territory received technical assistance for in-country training from such agencies and organizations as the British Development Division in the Caribbean (BDDC), the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC), the Canada Training Awards Project, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Manitoba Institute of Management of Canada and OECS. The Territory also received long- and short-term awards for overseas training from the United States Agency for International Development, the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration and CDB. For the period 1989-1991, a total of 47 long-term training awards and over 100 short-term awards were granted. Some 45 students completed training, 6 of whom went on to further studies; 1 left the Territory and the others were absorbed into the labour force.

29. The United Kingdom Overseas Development Administration provided approximately £4.04 million in bilateral aid to Montserrat in 1989, of which £808,000 was for technical cooperation, including £166,000 for students and trainees. 8/

III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A. General

30. The economy of Montserrat is based mainly on construction, tourism and related financial, distributive and personal services. According to the administering Power, the economy improved in 1989, despite the disastrous effects of hurricane Hugo. The gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 21.5 per cent, at constant prices, compared with 12.4 per cent in 1988 and 10.8 per cent in 1987. This increase reflected the positive effect of substantial investments that followed the hurricane. In 1989, the per capita GDP was estimated at EC$ 14,540 (US$ 5,385). 9/ In 1988, the per capita GDP was EC$ 12,364 (US$ 4,579).

31. ECCB reported that the economy of Montserrat continued its recovery during 1990. As in 1989, growth was led by the construction sector which benefited from substantial inflows of labour and capital from other Caribbean countries and the United Kingdom. The rate of inflation, as measured by the consumer price index (CPI) rose to 6.8 per cent during 1990, compared with 3.6 and 1.8 per cent in 1988 and 1989 respectively. Prices in the services sector rose by 15.7 per cent, significantly higher than the 5.7 per cent increase registered in 1989. Food, which represents 50 per cent of the components included in the CPI, recorded only a modest 2.1 per cent increase. 10/

B. Public finance

32. On 20 December 1990, the Legislative Council approved the budget estimates for 1991. As previously reported (A/AC.109/1061, para. 31), revenue for that year was estimated at EC$ 40.7 million and recurrent expenditure at EC$ 38.97 million, reflecting increases of 15 and 16 per cent respectively over the budget estimates for 1990. Development fund expenditure based on externally approved funding for 1991 was estimated at EC$ 19.2 million, which would bring total expenditure to EC$ 58.2 million.

33. According to ECCB, provisional data for the fiscal operations of the Government indicated that the current account surplus for 1990 increased to EC$ 5.8 million from the EC$ 3.7 million recorded in 1989. That increase was the result of the relatively stronger growth in revenue than expenditure. Revenue rose by 16.7 per cent to EC$ 42.7 million, and expenditure grew by 12.2 per cent. Revenue from tax sources accounted for EC$ 38.4 million (13.9 per cent greater than in 1989) while the revenue yield from non-tax sources rose by EC$ 1.4 million (48.3 per cent) to EC$ 4.3 million. The most important revenue sources were taxes on imports and international transactions, whose yield was EC$ 21.9 million, an increase of 26.9 per cent over 1989.

34. Recurrent expenditure rose by 12.2 per cent during 1990, mainly as a result of the wage increase of 20 per cent awarded to civil servants that year. Provisional estimates put the wage bill at EC$ 21.5 million, representing an increase of EC$ 4.9 million (29.5 per cent) over 1989. 10/

C. Agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry

35. Information provided by the administering Power indicates the following seven key elements continued to be the basis of the territorial Government policy in the agriculture sector:

(a) Settlement of viable farm units on agricultural estates;

(b) Provision of support services, including marketing extension services and credit;

(c) Irrigation;

(d) Soil and water conservation;

(e) Development of agro-based and food-processing industries;

(f) Import substitution and self-sufficiency in a wide range of food products, especially fresh vegetables, fruit preserves, honey and fish;

(g) Administrative support for coordination of agricultural production in order to market products both locally and externally.

36. The policy of the Government regarding livestock is to maintain a relatively disease-free animal population through preventive measures and farmer education, in order to achieve self-sufficiency in meat and meat products. Several programmes are in various stages of development and assistance is being sought from the Caribbean Rural Development, Advisory and Training Service (CARDATS) and CIDA.

37. In its report for 1990, CDB noted that production of short-term crops for domestic consumption, such as sweet potatoes, white potatoes and cucumbers, had been restored to pre-hurricane levels. Long-term investment in the sector was still inadequate, however, since infrastructural bottlenecks such as weak marketing and distribution systems remained, slowing the agricultural development of the Territory.

38. CDB also noted that as a result of the time needed before livestock production was restored to its original levels, the industry performed below its potential in 1990. On the other hand, increased investment in deep-sea fishing had led to increases in the volume of fresh fish. The development of activities other than inshore fishing as well as revised fishing legislation were contributing to the rebuilding of inshore marine resources. 11/

39. In December 1990, the Chief Minister announced a 20-year forestry management programme for the development of the Territory's forestry reserves, which had been severely damaged by the hurricane (see A/AC.109/1061, para. 35). In its report on the Territory for 1989/90, the administering Power announced the implementation of a programme in which agricultural production would be increased in a manner consistent with sound land-use practices and environmental conservation. The project was expected to last five years, with a budget of from EC$ 5 million to EC$ 6 million. Reafforestation and other outputs of this programme would include measures to rehabilitate and conserve soil and water resources. It was also reported that a small Forestry Division was established, comprising one forestry officer and five forest rangers, two of whom had completed training in Saint Lucia in 1990.

D. Industry

40. The manufacturing sector consists mainly of small-scale production for local and regional markets. An electronics assembly plant, which employs an estimated 200 persons, produced goods for export to the United States. Other plants manufacture cotton yarn and garments, as well as furniture and leather goods. Agro-processing facilities have also been making an increasing contribution to the sector. As previously reported, manufacturing production and exports were affected by the hurricane, which damaged most of the facilities and destroyed the port.

41. According to the administering Power in its 1989/90 report, exports of locally produced items were declining, as the industrial phase which started in 1978 had been virtually destroyed in 1989 by the hurricane. Both the administering Power and the territorial Government noted that the strategy of focusing on foreign investors over the past 10 years had not been as successful as anticipated. They emphasized the vital role to be played by local investors in the economic development of the Territory. In this regard, a number of fiscal and other incentives were announced by the territorial Government (see A/AC.109/1077, paras. 4 and 14). In its report, the administering Power stated that the development of small enterprises would be pursued with the collaboration of all agencies concerned, including public and private sector institutions. The report also noted that in the area of foreign investment, the territorial Government would encourage investment in high-technology industries, such as hydroponics, which would make maximum utilization of the Territory's scarce land resources. A number of investment opportunities were outlined, including the bottling of spring-water, film and video production and light manufacturing.

E. Communications and other basic facilities

42. Information concerning the Territory's rehabilitation and recovery programme in the aftermath of hurricane Hugo is outlined in the previous working paper (A/AC.109/1061, paras. 40-45). The Overseas Development Administration stated in its 1990 report that between September and December 1989, the United Kingdom had provided over £4.2 million for immediate hurricane relief and rehabilitation for the affected British Dependent Territories and that the largest amount of aid had gone to Montserrat. The report also indicated that at the end of 1989, work was under way to assess the long-term needs of the Territory. According to the Overseas Development Administration, it was already clear that Montserrat would require substantial amounts of aid over the next few years to reconstruct and develop its infrastructure if the Territory was to reach economic self-sufficiency. 8/ As reported in the above-mentioned working paper (A/AC.109/1061, para. 45), the United Kingdom Government had agreed to provide an estimated EC$ 66 million towards the cost of long-term recovery programmes beginning in April 1991.

43. According to press reports, Chief Minister John Osborne visited London in July 1991 and held discussions with officials of the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office on a number of issues, including hurricane-related

reconstruction and airport development. Following the general elections in October 1991 and his appointment as Chief Minister, Mr. Reuben Meade visited Barbados to hold meetings with officials of CDB and the European Commission concerning a project to reconstruct the port facilities at Plymouth, destroyed by the hurricane. On his return to the Territory, he stated that the obstacles to implementation of the project had been removed, and that potential contractors would soon visit the Territory before submitting final tenders. According to the report, the project which is expected to cost over US$ 10 million, will take one year for completion. The new jetty will accommodate larger cargo boats, as well as cruise liners. Mr. Meade subsequently visited London and Brussels with representatives of the United Kingdom Government and the European Community. 12/

44. The Montserrat Reporter, a local newspaper, reported in its 13 December 1991 issue that the Minister for Communications and Works had outlined the Government's capital development programme for the next five years. The programme included the renovation and remodelling of the new Glendon Hospital; the rehabilitation of the old hospital as an out-patient facility; and rehabilitation of police stations, schools, government offices and other facilities, as well as improvements to the airport roads and the drainage system. The Minister stated that the Government had requested supplementary funds from BDDC for a coastal protection project. 13/

45. In related developments, the manager of the Territory's airport participated in a Caribbean Airport Managers' Association Programme, conducted by the Manitoba Institute of Management at Winnipeg, Canada, in May 1991. The programme, which was funded by CIDA, was designed to provide airport managers in the region with the opportunity of observing and experiencing the operations of the Canadian airport system, and ongoing advisory assistance in adapting such systems to the requirements of individual Caribbean countries. 14/

46. According to Cable and Wireless, West Indies, Ltd., which provides telephone service to the Territory, the 4,000th telephone line was expected to be installed by April 1992. The Company reported improved service, with 80 per cent of new requests for telephone installations being filled within 15 days; and a waiting list reduced from 400 to 20. 15/

F. Tourism

47. According to the administering Power, in 1989/90, the tourist industry, which was severely affected by the hurricane, had still not fully recovered. Hotel infrastructure in the Territory had not changed much in recent years, but, since the majority of visitors stayed in villas and private homes, a rapid expansion in the home-building sector had added substantially to tourist accommodation. Stay-over visitors and cruise-ship passengers numbered around 18,000 and 10,000 respectively. The volume of stay-over visitors was restricted by air transport limitations, mainly the absence of an adequate runway.

48. Gross earnings from tourism in 1989 were estimated at EC$ 23 million, much of it earned after the hurricane in September, when a large number of nationals living abroad, foreign property owners and relief workers visited the Territory.

49. In its annual report for 1991, ECCB stated that the tourism sector continued to be affected by the disruption caused by the hurricane, as the reconstruction of hotels and villas took longer than was initially estimated. The tourism sector was marked by a generally weak performance as falling visitor arrivals were reflected in low occupancy rates in spite of a reduced hotel capacity. Owing to the reduced demand for accommodation, during the period under review, hoteliers and villa managers seized the opportunity to carry out structural and design improvements. 10/

G. External trade

50. Imports have risen with the growth of the economy, and the rising standard of living at the household level tends to reflect an increase in the luxury content of imports.

51. Exports of locally produced items are decreasing steadily, owing to the inability of the industrial sector to recover from the damage done by the hurricane. The re-exportation of empty containers, the return of goods and the dispatch of personal effects is more significant in total exports than locally produced exports.

52. The following is a summary of imports and exports:

(In millions of East Caribbean dollars)

	1987	1988	1989
Total imports	63.1	71.7	35.2
Locally produced goods	8.2	4.8	1.3
Re-exports	1.8	1.4	3.2
Total exports	10.0	6.2	4.5

Sources of imports (Percentage of distribution):

United States	United Kingdom	CARICOM countries	Other	Total
40	20	15	25	100

Destination of domestic exports (percentage of distribution):

United States	United Kingdom	CARICOM countries	Other	Total
90	2	6	2	100

Exports to the United States are comprised almost exclusively of assembled electronic parts; sea-island cotton goods and printed shirts are exported to other destinations.

53. ECCB reported that provisional data indicate that the trend of strong imports and weak exports continued during the second quarter of 1991. Although imports decreased from the record high level reached during the first quarter of 1990, they were, however, still above their pre-hurricane level. The increase in imports reflected the continuing rebuilding programme which followed the hurricane. Total exports continued to decrease. 10/

H. Financial institutions

54. In 1990, there were five commercial banks providing full banking services in the Territory: Barclays Bank International PLC, Royal Bank of Canada Ltd., Bank of Montserrat, Ltd., Guardian International Bank Ltd., and East Caribbean International Bank. During the year, the number of offshore banks licensed to operate in the Territory was reduced from 340 to 88.

55. Commercial bank deposits rose by 7 per cent to US$ 47 million between December 1989 and September 1990. Loans and advances grew by 57 per cent to US$ 30 million over the same period. These increases were associated with the settlement of insurance claims following the hurricane and the increased demand for credit to finance the restoration of private property and the replacement of consumer durables. Interest rates remained stable during the first nine months of 1990. 11/

56. In June 1991, the Financial Secretaries of the five British dependent Territories in the Caribbean and the North Atlantic attended a meeting in the Cayman Islands on offshore banking. The topics included international law as it relates to money movement around the world, and the impact of forthcoming European Community legislation on offshore financial services in the Caribbean. The meeting was called following a recommendation in a report of the United Kingdom House of Commons regarding financial institutions in the above Territories. 16/ The report was prepared by Mr. Rodney Gallagher, the Regional Financial Services Adviser for the Caribbean dependent Territories appointed by the Government of the United Kingdom (see A/AC.109/1061, para. 50-51).

57. It was also reported that the Chief Minister of Montserrat had co-chaired a discussion panel on offshore financial services at the fifteenth Annual Conference on the Caribbean, held at Miami, United States, in November 1991. In his remarks, the Chief Minister stated that since the offshore financial services industry required little or no natural resources, it could make a substantial contribution, particularly to smaller islands. He noted that Montserrat had made a number of mistakes prior to 1989, but that the clean-up process had been completed and the Territory was ready to resume full activities in January 1992. 17/

I. Assistance from the United Nations system of organizations

58. Details of information concerning the assistance of the United Nations system of organizations to Non-Self-Governing-Territories are contained in the report of the President of the Economic and Social Council on consultations held by the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples with representatives of the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations. 18/ Comprehensive information concerning assistance from this source to Montserrat is contained in document A/AC.109/1061, paras. 52-58. Supplementary information is provided below.

59. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) remains the main source of assistance from within the United Nations system. Its country programme for the Territory for 1987-1991 remained the frame of reference for external technical cooperation inputs. For the period 1987-1991, although UNDP programmed a total of US$ 677,000, expenditure over this period was US$ 443,000. A net indicative planning figure for the Territory covering the period 1991-1996 has been set at US$ 365,919. UNDP will provide assistance in the following areas: repair and maintenance of the Montserrat Technical College (US$ 143,919); physical planning and housing assistance (US$ 140,505), development of Galaways Soufriere (Phase 1, US$ 37,700); water resources development (US$ 24,730); and accounting (US$ 19,000). Expenditures of US$ 211,350 and US$ 121,812 are proposed for 1991 and 1992 respectively.

60. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has programmed the following funds for Montserrat:

Activity	1991	1992
	(US dollars)	
Early childhood education/development	19 100	10 300
Nutrition	5 800	11 600
Health	-	19 600

61. In addition, the Territory would continue to participate in a multi-island programme for the Eastern Caribbean for a period which began in 1988 and ends in 1992 with resources of US$ 2.25 million approved by the Executive Board of UNICEF.

62. On 11 December 1991, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/70, in which, inter alia, it requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures for promoting and expanding cooperation and coordination among the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in their assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Assembly decided to keep the question under review.

IV. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A. Labour

63. During the period under review, Montserrat experienced full employment. Widespread devastation caused by the hurricane created a demand for construction workers and the resultant expansion of the labour force was due to the introduction of migrant labour. The total number of persons in the labour force in 1990 was 5,700, compared with 5,300 in 1989, and the numbers of unemployed persons were 10 and 55 respectively. The number of construction workers doubled from 1,000 in 1988 to 2,000 in 1990 (see para. 31).

64. ECCB reported in 1991 that, as a result of the shortage of skilled labour, wages paid to this category of workers more than doubled between 1988 and 1990, and that this affected wages elsewhere in the private sector. 10/

65. ECCB also reported that, following a negotiated agreement, civil servants had been awarded a 20 per cent wage increase in 1990. 10/

B. Public health

66. The Territory enjoys a high standard of public health. In December 1990, the Chief Minister announced several programmes affecting public health (see A/AC.109/1061, para. 59). The Ministry of Health and Community Services, through the Department of Health, is responsible for public health. According to information provided by the administering Power, the policy of the territorial Government on health was geared towards providing health services based on the concept of primary health care.

C. Women and development

67. Women in the Territory enjoy freedom from discrimination in employment and educational opportunities. Amendments in 1984 to the Immigration and Passport Ordinance and in 1986 to the Income Tax Ordinance have enhanced the status of women as citizens and wage earners.

V. EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS

68. Education in the Territory is compulsory and free for all children between 5 and 16 years of age and is provided at nursery, primary and secondary levels. Under the restructured system all children now have access to five years of secondary education. Plans are under way to upgrade the Technical College to a post-secondary institution.

69. Tertiary education continues to be provided by the University of the West Indies and other regional institutions. Most students attend those institutions on scholarships provided by the Government of the United Kingdom, CIDA and other donors.

70. The following information was released by the territorial Government in February 1991, for the academic year 1990/91:

	Students	Staff
Primary schools	1 172	67
Secondary schools	818	82
Technical College	51	11

71. In 1990, expenditure on education amounted to EC$ 6.8 million (16 per cent of national revenue, or 19 per cent of national expenditure). Over a six-year period from 1985 to 1990, expenditure on education accounted for 18 and 19 per cent of revenue and expenditure respectively. 19/

Notes

1/ The information contained in the present paper has been derived from published reports and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations on 10 October 1991 for the year 1989/90.

2/ Caribbean Contact (Barbados), November/December 1991.

3/ The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 22 November 1991.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Fourth Committee, 11th meeting.

5/ The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 7 June 1991.

6/ Daily News (St. Thomas), 17 September 1991.

7/ The Montserrat Mirror (Plymouth), 27 September 1991.

8/ Overseas Development Administration; British Overseas Aid: 1987 (Annual Review) (HMSO, 7/88).

9/ The local currency is the East Caribbean dollar (EC$). One United States dollar (US$ 1.00) is equivalent to EC$ 2.70.

10/ ECCB, Report and Statement of Accounts (for the financial year ended 31 March 1991).

11/ CDB, Annual Report 1990.

12/ Caribbean Insight, vol. 14, No. 9, September 1991; see also The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 25 October 1991.

Notes (continued)

13/ The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 13 December 1991.

14/ Ibid., 17 May 1991.

15/ Ibid., 15 November 1991.

16/ Ibid., 7 June 1991.

17/ Ibid., 6 December 1991.

18/ E/1991/116.

19/ The Government Information Unit: Civic File, vol. 1, No. 1, February 1991.